

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, MX

SUBJECT: IMPACT OF TOURISM ON BAJA ENVIRONMENT

1. INTERIOR DEPARTMENT IS CONSIDERING POSSIBLE OFFER TO MEXICO OF EXPERTISE TO ASSIST LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN THEIR EFFORTS TO DEAL WITH DETRIMENTAL EFFECTS ON BAJA ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL VALUES OF EXPECTED INFLUX OF AMERICAN TOURISTS USING NEWLY COMPLETED BAJA TRANSPENINSULA HIGHWAY.

2. PRESENT THINKING IS THAT OFFER WOULD MAKE AVAILABLE EXPERTISE IN LAND USE PLANNING, NATURAL SCIENCES, COMMUNICATIONS, AND TOURIST-ORIENTED LAW ENFORCEMENT. WORK WOULD BE DONE IN BAJA UNDER DIRECTION OF LOCAL MEXICAN OFFICIALS FOR PERIOD OF THREE TO SIX MONTHS BEGINNING SOMETIME NEXT SPRING. INTERIOR WOULD PAY SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF EXPERTS.

3. BEFORE GIVING FURTHER CONSIDERATION TO OFFER OR GEARING UP INTERNAL ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINERY, INTERIOR WOULD

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LIKE TO HAVE EMBASSY'S GENERAL REACTION. IF REACTION IS

POSITIVE, INTERIOR WOULD LIKE EMBASSY SUGGESTIONS ON HOW BEST TO PROCEED ONCE INTERNAL PROCEDURES COMPLETED AND OFFER READY. FOR EXAMPLE, WHAT WOULD BE BEST CHANNEL FOR

APPROACH TO MEXICO, WOULD FORMAL AGREEMENT BE NECESSARY, WITH WHOM WOULD ARRANGEMENTS HAVE TO BE MADE, WHAT PRIVILEGES, IF ANY WOULD BE AVAILABLE TO INTERIOR EXPERTS WHILE IN BAJA? ON LATTER POINT, INTERIOR GIVING THOUGHT TO POSSIBILITY THAT EXPERTS COULD RESIDE IN SAN DIEGO FOR SAKE CONVENIENCE.

4. IDEA OF OFFER GREW OUT OF INFORMATION OBTAINED DURING ATTENDANCE IN OCTOBER BY INTERIOR OFFICIAL OF FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TOURISM AND ENVIRONMENT OF BAJA PENINSULA. LOCAL MEXICAN PRIVATE AND GOVERNMENT INDIVIDUALS THERE EXPRESSED SERIOUS CONCERN ABOUT IMPACT OF EXPECTED INCREASE IN TOURISM AND ABOUT THEIR CAPABILITIES FOR DEALING WITH IT.

5. STATE COMMENT: DEPARTMENT HAS NO OBJECTION IN PRINCIPLE TO RENDERING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO MEXICO AS PROPOSED BY INTERIOR. HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF MEXICO'S POLICY WITH REGARD TO BILATERAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, WE PREFER THAT SUCH REQUESTS BE INITIATED BY MEXICO THROUGH THE FOREIGN SECRETARIAT TO THE EMBASSY. WE THEREFORE BELIEVE THAT THE EMBASSY SHOULD NOT APPROACH THE GOM ON THIS PROPOSAL. WE WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S ASSESSMENT OF LIKELIHOOD THAT A REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE SUCH AS THAT SUGGESTED BY INTERIOR WOULD BE FORTHCOMING FROM GOM IN THE EVENT THAT IT IS PROPOSED TO THE GOM BY LOCAL OFFICIALS IN BAJA CALIFORNIA. RUSH

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